

Think Tank Challenges Greenpeace to Meet Transparency Standards

Statement of National Center Vice President David Ridenour on Greenpeace's "ExxonMobil's Continued Funding of Global Warming Denial Industry":

Today The National Center for Public Policy Research is challenging Greenpeace and its affiliates to disclose the sources and amounts of its 2006 donations exceeding \$50,000. If it does so, The National Center for Public Policy Research will do the same.

We're making this challenge in light of allegations in Greenpeace's May 17 report, "ExxonMobil's Continued Funding of Global Warming Denial Industry," which suggests that it is improper for 41 groups, including The National Center for Public Policy Research, to accept contributions from ExxonMobil because the positions of at least some of them on climate issues is not precisely in accordance with those of Greenpeace.

Most of the groups singled out for criticism in the Greenpeace report work on a wide variety of public policy issues. For most of the groups, climate policy is just a small fraction of their portfolio.

Greenpeace - perhaps based on its own behavior - assumes that donations influence the stands groups such as ours take. They do not. So that the public can judge for themselves, we're challenging Greenpeace to complete transparency through disclosure of major gifts.

Funding from energy companies is not what is fueling the vigorous climate debate. What is fueling the debate is genuine, sincere belief that great uncertainties remain - both on the science and on the appropriate public policy response.

As the stakes, and the costs, of the climate debate are immense, it is entirely proper that many voices and perspectives be considered - not just those of Greenpeace and its allies. If Greenpeace disagrees with others, it might more productively use its resources debating the issue itself, rather than focus on the fact that certain groups also addressing climate issues receive less than 1% of its revenue from ExxonMobil -- as ours did.

Greenpeace has profited more from corporate largesse than The National Center for Public Policy Research and similar groups ever will. Although Greenpeace has a policy against accepting direct corporate donations, the group just received a \$27 million bequest from the heir of a major shipping company, a company which emitted 7.13 million tons of CO2 in 2005 (about .12% of ALL U.S. CO2 emissions).

Further, Greenpeace Executive Director John Passacantando's compensation is three times - perhaps more - the total amount of corporate contributions The National Center for Public Policy Research received in 2006.

Perhaps that fact puts things a little more into perspective.

If Greenpeace expects its call for public disclosure of grants of other groups to be taken seriously, they should lead by example.

If not, they're the real "denial industry."